

HOUSE BILL 152

By Keisling

AN ACT to amend Tennessee Code Annotated, Title 39;  
Title 40 and Title 71, relative to elderly and  
vulnerable adults.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE:

SECTION 1. This act is known and may be cited as the "Safe Seniors Act."

SECTION 2. Tennessee Code Annotated, Section 39-13-202(a)(2), is amended by  
deleting the subdivision and substituting the following:

(2) A killing of another committed in the perpetration of or attempt to perpetrate  
any first degree murder, act of terrorism, arson, rape, robbery, burglary, theft,  
kidnapping, aggravated abuse of an elderly or vulnerable adult in violation of § 39-15-  
511, aggravated neglect of an elderly or vulnerable adult in violation of § 39-15-508,  
aggravated child abuse, aggravated child neglect, rape of a child, aggravated rape of a  
child, or aircraft piracy; or

SECTION 3. Tennessee Code Annotated, Section 39-15-501(13), is amended by  
deleting "fondling" and substituting "sexual contact, as defined in § 39-13-501".

SECTION 4. Tennessee Code Annotated, Section 40-11-150(a), is amended by  
deleting the subsection and substituting the following:

(a) In addition to the factors set out in § 40-11-118, in making a decision  
concerning the amount of bail required for the release of a defendant who is  
arrested for the offense of child abuse, child neglect, or child endangerment, as  
defined in § 39-15-401; the offense of aggravated child abuse, aggravated child  
neglect, or aggravated child endangerment, as defined in § 39-15-402; the offense  
of stalking, aggravated stalking, or especially aggravated stalking, as defined in §

39-17-315; a violation of § 39-15-507 or § 39-15-508, involving neglect or aggravated neglect of an elderly or vulnerable adult; any criminal offense defined in title 39, chapter 13, in which the alleged victim of the offense is a victim as defined in § 36-3-601(5), (10), or (11), or is in violation of an order of protection as authorized by title 36, chapter 3, part 6, the magistrate shall review the facts of the arrest and detention of the defendant and determine whether the defendant is:

- (1) A threat to the alleged victim;
- (2) A threat to public safety; and
- (3) Reasonably likely to appear in court.

SECTION 5. Tennessee Code Annotated, Section 40-11-150(k)(1), is amended by deleting the subdivision and substituting the following:

(1) A magistrate or other official shall not release an offender arrested for a violation of § 39-15-510 or § 39-15-511, involving abuse or aggravated abuse of an elderly or vulnerable adult, or for a violation of § 39-15-507 or § 39-15-508, involving neglect or aggravated neglect of an elderly or vulnerable adult, within twelve (12) hours of the time of arrest. However, the magistrate or other official duly authorized to release the offender may release the offender in less than twelve (12) hours if the magistrate or other official finds that the offender is not a threat to the alleged victim.

SECTION 6. Tennessee Code Annotated, Section 39-15-504, is amended by deleting the section and substituting the following:

In a case where an alleged offense under this part has been committed against an elderly or vulnerable adult, upon the state's motion, the court shall conduct a hearing to preserve the testimony of the victim within sixty (60) days of filing the motion, whether the case originates in general sessions court or criminal court.

SECTION 7. Tennessee Code Annotated, Section 40-35-115(b), is amended by adding the following language as a new subdivision:

(8) The defendant is convicted of two (2) or more statutory offenses involving sexual exploitation of an elderly or vulnerable adult with consideration of the aggravating circumstances arising from the relationship between the defendant and victim, the nature and scope of the sexual acts, and the extent of the physical and mental damage to the victim.

SECTION 8. Tennessee Code Annotated, Section 39-15-506(a)(1), is amended by deleting the subdivision and substituting the following:

(1) Following a conviction for a violation of § 39-15-502, § 39-15-507(b) or (c), § 39-15-508, § 39-15-510, § 39-15-511, or § 39-15-512, or an attempt to commit any of those offenses, or at the discretion of the court for a conviction of § 39-15-507(d), the clerk of the court shall notify the department of health of the conviction by sending a copy of the judgment in the manner set forth in § 68-11-1003 for inclusion on the registry pursuant to title 68, chapter 11, part 10.

SECTION 9. Tennessee Code Annotated, Section 39-13-502(a)(3)(B), is amended by deleting the subdivision and substituting the following:

(B) The defendant knows or has reason to know that the victim is mentally defective, mentally incapacitated, physically helpless, or a vulnerable adult as defined in § 39-15-501.

SECTION 10. Tennessee Code Annotated, Section 39-15-501(9), amended by deleting the subdivision and substituting the following:

(9)

(A) "Physical harm" means an action that causes pain, injury, or diminished health, or an action that would cause a reasonable person to suffer physical pain, injury, or diminished health, regardless of gravity or duration;

(B) For purposes of subdivision (9)(A), "diminished health" means to make or cause the mental, emotional, or physical health of an individual to be weakened, lessened, or reduced;

SECTION 11. Tennessee Code Annotated, Section 39-13-503(a)(3), is amended by deleting the subdivision and substituting the following:

(3) The defendant knows or has reason to know that the victim is mentally defective, mentally incapacitated, physically helpless, or a vulnerable adult as defined in § 39-15-501; or

SECTION 12. Tennessee Code Annotated, Section 71-6-118(c)(2), is amended by adding the following as a new subdivision:

(D) In addition to the disclosures required to be made by adult protective services under § 39-15-509, shall provide to the district attorney general, upon request, the names of individuals obtained in the course of an adult protective services investigation that have information relevant to a criminal investigation of alleged conduct involving an elderly or vulnerable adult victim. However, if the name of the person that reported the alleged conduct is included, then the individual must not be identified as the reporter of the alleged conduct;

SECTION 13. Tennessee Code Annotated, Title 39, Chapter 15, Part 5, is amended by adding the following as a new section:

The circuit, general sessions, and chancery courts have jurisdiction over proceedings arising under this part.

SECTION 14. Tennessee Code Annotated, Section 39-15-505(a), is amended by adding the following at the end of the subsection:

The state may request the motion in any court, juvenile, general sessions, criminal, or circuit, having jurisdiction over the accused and may be requested at any stage of the proceedings after the accused's initial appearance.

SECTION 15. For the purpose of promulgating rules, policies, and procedures for the implementation of this act, this act takes effect upon becoming a law, the public welfare requiring it. For all other purposes, this act takes effect July 1, 2021, the public welfare requiring it.